

Contra Costa Water District: Canal Levee Elimination and Flood Mitigation Project

Staff Recommendation: Include in Interim Plan.

Background

The applicant is proposing to replace 21,000 feet of unlined canal with a pipeline to improve source water quality available to the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) and eliminate aging canal embankments that were not intended to provide flood protection. The project is multi-phased with a total of three construction phases. Environmental review and the first phase (2009) of the project are complete. Completion of the Dutch Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration project is dependent upon construction of the CCWD pipeline adjacent to the site. Breaching of the Dutch Slough project site will not occur until encasement of the Canal south of the site is complete as stated in the EIR Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. Dutch Slough is identified in Table 4-1 Specific Early Actions Identified in the Statute in the Final Interim Plan.

The applicant has indicated that the project has already started construction (Phase 1 is complete) and has requested that the entire project be included as an Early Action. Phase 2 is in active design with proposed completion in November 2011; however funding constraints have delayed progress. Construction could begin as early as spring 2011 if funding is available. The applicant is earnestly seeking funding on an ongoing basis.

The project meets the following Delta Reform Act Policy Objectives:

- Manage the Delta's water and environmental resources and the water resources of the state over the long term; and
- Protect and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, and agricultural values of the California Delta as an evolving place; and
- Restore the Delta ecosystems, including its fisheries and wildlife, as the heart of a healthy estuary and wetland ecosystem; and
- Promote statewide water conservation, water use efficiency, and sustainable water use; and
- Improve water quality to protect human health and the environment consistent with achieving water quality objectives in the Delta; and
- Improve the water conveyance system and expand statewide water storage; and

Delta Stewardship Council Committee – Early Actions Review

Meeting Date: October 11th and 12th, 2010

Early Action Project or Plan Review: Staff Recommendation

- Reduce risks to people, property, and state interests in the Delta by effective emergency preparedness, appropriate land uses, and investments in flood protection.

The applicant has provided a Notice of Determination and the *Final Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Contra Costa Canal Replacement Project* (November 2006).

The applicant's scientific justification includes a variety of reports that support the Contra Costa Canal Levee Elimination Project, including several reports that were independently reviewed (CALFED and EPA). A brief list of important supporting documents is provided in the application. Science staff has indicated that the provided scientific information and science rationale is adequate for informing the proposed early action. The CALFED Water Quality Program was in support of and funded the initial stage of the proposed project. The proposal for the first phase of proposed early action underwent formal external review by a CALFED Water Quality Program independent review panel. The review panel found that this project would provide the water quality benefits claimed. Contra Costa Water District followed the majority of the guidelines recommended for best available science including the use of peer-reviewed publications, scientific expert opinion, and formal and informal external review.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1 – Application for Consideration of a Plan or Project

Contact

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